PUDUKKOTTAI STATE

WAR INFORMATION BUREAU

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LECTURE LXV.

THE GREATEST BATTLE OF ALL TIME.

1. A gigantic battle, engaging unheard-of forces and involving unheard-of casualties, has been in progress for four months, and so laconic have been the official communiqués (barring occasional propaganda announcements so extravagant and contradictory that only a half-wit would be affected by them) that expert strategical commentators in the world's press have hardly dared pronounce upon a situation or hazard an outcome. It is understandable therefore that we have so far refrained in this paper from any attempt to influence the hopes or opinions of our readers beyond indications of what mere maps disclose, or what strategical or industrial interest attaches to a string of Russian place-names.

Recently, however, there have been certain developments, mainly outside Russia itself, which make it more possible to assess what is almost immediately at stake for Hitler, for the Russians, and for ourselves in India. One of these events was the Russo-British occupation of Iran. Another was the great production rally for early assistance to our Russian Allies called for by Mr. Winston Churchill

and Lord Beaverbrook. It is at any rate certain that events of incalculable importance to the history of the world are now in process of resolution, and it may be as well to construct as clear a picture as possible of the situation now that winter approaches and the character of the fighting in RUSSIA must altogether change.

2. Let us get out our maps, then—the kaleidoscope is unintelligible without a map—and make certain general deductions from the situations and apparent directions of the German armies first; then let us examine the prospects of the Soviet armies themselves; and finally we will take some of the immediate incidents (incidents, I may say, which would have been counted major engagements in times within our own memory) and see what importance is to be attached to them in relation to the main tendencies of the campaign.

The original objectives. 3. When Hitler began his invasion in June, it was generally estimated that he had three major objectives, one of which had a further and even more important objective beyond it. The attainment of these was calculated to put RUSSIA out of the War for good and all. They were LENINGRAD, MOSCOW, and KIEV, the latter being the one with that Eldorado of the Germans, the oil resources of the CAUCASUS and IRAN, beyond it. If he could capture LENINGRAD, he would destroy the Russian Baltic fleet, and open up a most valuable line of supply for his invading armies. If he could subdue MOSCOW, he would turn the Soviet Government into refugees, and paralyse both the political and industrial nerve-centre of the country. If he could capture KIEV, the capital of the coveted UKRAINE, he would find a people ready for Nazification, a granary and coal-field on which to halt, recuperate and reinforce, a springboard for an early 1942 thrust into the very vitals of the British Empire, the NEAR, and MIDDLE EAST, and INDIA. There were lots of intermediate objectives of varying importance, but these three are the focal points of the whole mental composition. There are various estimates as to the time Hitler expected to take over the job; some said three weeks; some said six; some said three months (rather more likely) and some said "he's GOT to do it before winter falls, or GERMANY and Nazism are defeated".

The missing essential. 4. Well, Hitler hasn't done even the greater part of the job within the longest of the spans allotted (by foreign opinion), and if, as reported

to-day, snow has already fallen in the UKRAINE, winter is fairly near. The principal reason for its apparent 'failure' is that in order that the three great Russian centres should fall together (and with them the U. S. S. R.'s whole spirit of resistance) the almost simultaneous defeat in the field of the mobilised and equipped Russian armies was a *sine qua non.* I say 'almost simultaneous' in the sense that if any one of the three defending armies under Voroshilov, Timoshenko and Budenny could be surrounded, cut off and liquidated by either massacre or capitulation, each of the others would be left with a fatally unguarded flank, and must soon fall victim to the finest military machine ever conceived, contrived, and transported into the field. Most fortunately, the Russians have put up a defence of which hardly a military critic living thought them capable. They have suffered defeat after defeat in the tactical and territorial sense, but they have never lost cohesion, they have never lost morale, they have never been put out of action in the mass, so that facing the strategically victorious German hordes are still large, coherent, and spiritually-erect armies. KIEV has fallen, but there was no capitulation of large forces. LENINGRAD, repeatedly claimed by the Germans to be invested and on the point of surrender, is neither wholly invested, nor has a brilliant resistance ceased to cause the Huns the most terrific losses. As to MOSCOW, life in the capital is nearly normal, and instead of a victorious onwards march against it from SMOLENSK, the Germans have for weeks been kept busy and anxious 100 miles from their objective by repeated counter-attacks under Marshall Timoshenko.* And as we said above, winter, the cruel Russian winter, is now no more weeks away than it was months when Hitler started.

The situation of the Russian Armies.

5. When we have said this, however, we have said as much as can be said in the optimistic vein of the immediate military situation. British and American aid—in any fully effective sense—is a factor for next year, not this, (though we shall touch on this subject again later). At the moment it would be foolish to ignore the fact that the situation of the Soviet armies has grown more serious lately. Hitler and his advisers did not enter this arena with their eyes shut; they knew and know that the onset of winter must put a serious brake on their strategy, although it would be foolish to hope that failure to break

* Please see note at end.

the Russian resistance this year will see the abandonment of the whole plan. It most certainly will not. Anyhow, they are now obviously prepared to immolate perhaps the larger part of their existing armies in order to force a really substantial victory before winter. The entire Russian front is being subjected to the most terrific pressure utterly regardless of cost—in the great race against time, the race against exhaustion from sheer wastage of men, vehicles, fuel and supplies, the race against the impending reinforcement of the Russian armies by their own mighty reserves under training, and by the spate of war-materials (and perhaps other things) which must soon come from BRITAIN and AMERICA. In short, the Nazis see quite clearly what lies ahead, and they have decided that the immediate present is the time for the supreme effort. Such an effort they alone are in a position to make; none of the Allies are yet ready for anything 'supreme'.

Listen to how this effort is described an official estimate. "BERLIN," it says, "is perturbed by the receipt of weather forecasts predicting winter conditions at an unusually early date this year. They are frankly engaged on a race against winter. It is also a race against wastage. Apart from the high rate of replacement necessitated by the fearful losses in actual fighting, the wear and tear of vehicles and the consumption of fuel in maintaining supplies across some 500 miles of 'scorched earth' must be enormous. Lives, equipment and supplies are being expended at a rate which no military machine on earth can keep up for an extended period without endangering its existence by exhaustion. This colossal wastage is being deliberately ignored in order to inflict greater and permanent wastage upon the enemy by depriving him of his chief coal and oil fields and his industrial areas. The Germans simply have no option in the matter. It is neck or nothing." And it is this soullessly terrific onslaught that a battered Russian defence with heavily curtailed sources of supply, and possibly unfilled gaps in man-power has to withstand alone for a few more weeks!

How near are the Germans to their goal?

6. Let us be honest and admit that this third great wave of the German offensive, this frightful onslaught, has not yet lost its initial momentum. They are still hammering like mad at the defences of LENINGRAD. At many points of the compass they are at least near the city. Secondary lines of communication with MOSCOW and perhaps with MURMANSK seem to be still open, but Voroshilov's

armies themselves are assailed on many sides at once. Doubtless the Germans would like them to confine themselves to the defence of the great city itself,—in other words repeat the fatal mistakes of Bazaine and Macmahon at METZ and SEDAN, and convert what should be a mobile field army into enclosed fortress-defenders. At the moment there are no particular signs of this. Powerful garrisons do indeed hold the wide-flung ring of defensive forts a score or so of miles from the city itself, but the main body of the army seems livelily engaged in counter-attacks under the Marshall himself in the neighbourhood of the, Valdai Hills. Nevertheless, he must feel himself pretty hardly pressed and must be anxiously counting on the success of Timoshenko's long-delayed counter-attack in the central sector, to give him any permanent relief.*

Now let us look south. The loss of KREMENCHUNG and CHERNIGOV left KIEV in the air. Now that city, the capital of the UKRAINE· has fallen. It formed a salient, a pocket, and we do not know yet how many Russian troops were cut off in a pocket of land which is as big as HOLLAND! What we do know is that they will not surrender, but try to fight their way out. POLTAWA, too, has gone—a sentimental than a serious material loss and the fact remains that there is nothing much now in the path of a German drive south-east from GOMEL and east from KIEV before it comes to KHARKOV, a mighty industrial centre, and the hub of the Russian tank industry. This likely advance is being parallelled further south by determined German thrusts over the Dnieper into the Eastern UKRAINE, the Donetz basin, and the CRIMEA. The loss of the CRIMEA—mind you, it is by no means lost yet and may never be lost—would mean not only that the whole of the rich UKRAINE would be in German occupation, but that the great naval base at SEVASTOPOL would have to be abandoned. This again would greatly facilitate Hitler's other and even more southerly objective, namely a sea-borne invasion, via the Black Sea, of the CAUCASUS regions Winter need not stop this. Only successful Russian resistance, for a month or so more in Eastern UKRAINE and the CRIMEA will avail.

The counter-attack. 7. Now can Budenny's army be expected to hold out and maintain positions on the German flank that would make an invasion of the CAUCASUS hazardous almost to madness? The answer must at least be partially.

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* Please see note at end.

sought in the fortunes of the third great Russian commander, Marshall Timoshenko, in the central sector, and the very near future must furnish that answer ! From SMOLENSK to ROBRUISK and the PRIPET MARSHES, a gignatic battle rages. Details are so confusing that a summary of the chances is almost impossible. Timoshenko's counter-attack, thought by some to have been left dangerously late, sometimes seems to be succeeding, sometimes to recoil. If he has deliberately waited until both the German offensives north and south, have advanced so far as to embarrass their communications—have, in fact, got so far on that each would be left separately in the air provided their central army and all its communications could be crumpled up ; and again, if against that central German army, he has been able to mobilise and call up sufficient reserves of men and material to keep up the pressure and finally bring off a decisive victory, then the situation along the whole front will be decisively changed. The right flank of Von Leeb's army attacking LENINGRAD, and the left flank of Von Bock's armies striking in behind the Russian armies of the south, would be exposed, and with the near approach of winter, not only a check to their advance but enforced retreat and consolidation in defensive positions (if any!) would be their lot. No one knows yet how Timoshenko is going to fare. His task is most formidable, and everything seems to depend on the resources immediately at his command. If he has large reserves, if British tanks and aeroplanes can be made to supplement the impaired industrial output of the Russian arms industries, he may bring it off ; but if he hasn't enough weight behind his thrust, his advance can be only limited, and the northern and southern enemy forces will be unaffected.*

8. There is a very general and inexpert view of the main factors of an anxious and exciting situation. It seems to me anxious not because there is the least doubt about the morale of the Russian armies or its government, or about their being both magnificent natural fighters and also trained, armed and generally adequate to modern war conditions, but because the German effort is so terrific and so desperate, and when a machine such as the Nazis have built up knows it is terrific and feels desperate, its opponents have need to be adroit, stout-hearted and inspired to a degree.

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* Please see note at end.

9. Have I painted a depressing picture? Not in the least. I have merely emphasised that the situation is extraordinarily tense, and that any kind of complacency about the immediate future, is the attitude of a fool. On a long-term view, there is actually reason for quiet confidence in an ultimate Russian victory. Let us recapitulate very briefly the reasons for this view.

(i) Hitler's *blitzkrieg*—as such—against RUSSIA failed. His time table has been spoilt, and the invincibility legend of the German mechanized army debunked.

(ii) His expenditure in casualties and material for what he has gained is literally enormous.

(iii) The time factor, which originally was likely to be against him if *blitzkrieg* should by any chance fail, is now definitely and overwhelmingly against him.

(iv) In the centre, his armies are on the defensive, and one of his objectives at any rate, namely MOSCOW, must be out of his reach this year.*

(v) Other than this, he has two objectives of first-rate magnitude. One is the capture of LENINGRAD, both because of the effect it would have on German prestige abroad and morale at home, and also because full control of the Baltic and the Gulf of FINLAND would so tremendously facilitate his maintenance problem in the North. The other is the oilfields. His immense expenditure of oil over three months of war on an enormous front has made his southern push a matter of the utmost urgency. The winter he so dreads must affect —perhaps is already beginning to affect—one of these, the LENINGRAD objective, very seriously, and though this particular region becomes rigorous a bit later than some parts of Northern RUSSIA, fighting conditions will substantially deteriorate by mid-November. Voroshilov's defending armies do not seem to be enclosed; there are still ways into the city for reinforcements and supplies; and the fact that the Germans MUST take LENINGRAD and MUST release the investing troops for service elsewhere, may well involve

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* Please see note at end.

Hitler in losses of men and prestige from which he will find it hard to recover.

(vi) The other of the two remaining possibilities is, simply, OIL! Hitler's immense expenditure of oil over three months of war on an enormous front, has made his southern push a matter of the utmost urgency. Winter comes later in the south—perhaps not in its full force along the Black Sea littoral until late January. The German effort in this region is formidable, as the maps show. They threaten Marshall Budenny's defence from both the west and the north, and of the three offensives, it would seem that they have a better chance of rolling up this Russian army than any of the others. The UKRAINE is largely theirs, for what it is worth, and in any case its loss or destruction must have badly handicapped Russian resources.

On the other hand to avail themselves of Caucasian oil to any useful extent, the Germans *must be free of Russian interruption*, and there seems no danger of Budenny's forces doing anything worse than retreat. If they are not put out of action, they must always be a severe menace. Further, to use any gains in the CAUCASUS, the Germans must have complete control of the Black Sea. While the Russian fleet is at SEVASTOPOL, or even if it has to move to BATOUM, this the Germans cannot achieve without the most desperate adventures.

(vii) Even if the worst should happen in every sector—if Timoshenko's counter-attack fizzles out,* if LENINGRAD falls, if the CRIMEA is taken and the Germans invade the CAUCASUS by sea as well as land, *German success can be only temporary as long as the Russian army as a whole is undefeated*. Such a defeat, or any sign of breakdown in administrative or civil morale is not yet even a remote possibility. Nor is likely to prove one even if the Soviet armies have to retreat to the Volga—there are vast industrial resources in the Urals which can still expand and still supply armies in the field, and they will only have to carry that responsibility alone for the comparatively short time between

* Please see note at end.

now and, say, mid-1942, by which time the full flood of assistance being rallied in BRITAIN and U. S. A., expedited by new sea-routes, new railway routes and possibly by tremendously increased air-routes, will be available.

LATER NOTE.—* Since this paper was written, information is to hand of the beginning of a fourth Great German offensive (?) How much of this somewhat anxious news is skilfully managed propaganda is hard to assess, but superficially it bears out two points made in the above essay. The first is that the German High Command fully realises that a supreme effort is immediately necessary, in order to present to the German people any justification for Hitler's having invaded RUSSIA at all! The second is that Timoshenko's counter-attack in the central sector *was* possibly too late, and *was* insufficiently weighty, for the newspapers disclose that the Germans have selected this sector for their principal objective, in the hopes that they will encounter an army spent with a tremendous and infructuous effort.

At the worst we may perhaps comfort ourselves with the reflection that the capture of MOSCOW before winter stops them must take the Germans all their time and the main part of their resources, which might mean relaxation of the pressure on LENINGRAD and the Russian Baltic Fleet, and also on Budenny's hard-driven armies in the south and south-east.

APPENDIX.

LENINGRAD UNDER SIEGE.

FORTRESS THAT HAS NEVER BEEN CONQUERED.

THE DEFENCES ROUND THE CITY.

HOW BRITAIN CAN HELP HER ALLY.

By

Cyril Lakin (*In a recent B. B. C. Talk*).

EYES all over the world are still turned towards Leningrad, the largest city in history ever to suffer a siege. The Germans claim to have completed its encirclement and to have cut off reinforcements and supplies. Whether this is true or not, we must recognize the grave position and realise that Leningrad may very soon be effectually invested by the German forces. Marshal Voroshilov is holding the enemy at bay outside the city, while his brother Marshal, Timoshenko, is hitting as hard as he can at several points in the German sector. Marshal Timoshenko's counter-attack has now been in progress for over a week and there is no doubt that he has made a considerable

gain of territory south-east and south of Smolensk, while a second counter-attack further south has also met with some success. All this goes to prove that the offensive spirit and splendid morale of the Russian armies over prolonging periods of retreat still remains extremely high.

[The fourth German offensive had not begun when this was written—Ed.]

FACTS ABOUT THE CITY.

But there is no need to emphasise the gravity of Leningrad's position. It is Russia's greatest city, probably her greatest single centre for the manufacture of arms, the headquarters with Kronstadt of the Baltic Fleet. Above all, it is a fortress of such strength that it has never been taken by a conqueror.

Let me tell you something about this great city and its garrison. The entire Russian garrison is estimated by the Germans at 30 divisions or about 600,000 men, by others at as many as a million. All that we know for certain is that the peacetime garrison was about 800,000 and the fortifications immensely strong. To the west of the city barring the way from the coast, lies a range of hills, which Marshal Voroshilov's troops occupy. The hills are not high but they don't have to be to possess military importance. Veterans of the last war will remember the part played by the Messines ridge and the Chemin des Dames, both low and common-place to look at but high enough to provide observation for our artillery, which would command the plains beneath. The Leningrad hills stretch from Dyetskoye Selo, formerly Tsarskoye Selo the famous palace of the Czars, to Koporje, 45 miles away on the Gulf of Finland.

LIMITED SUPPORT OF BALTIC FLEET.

On **their right**, the Russians have the support of the Baltic Fleet based on Kronstadt—a valuable asset—but experience shows that warships cannot stand up very long to shore batteries and dive-bombers.

If the enemy drive the Russian defenders from these hills, they must then cross a **low plain broken by marshes and small streams** and defended by a system of sunken casemates of concrete and steel. For the time being this plain is passable for heavy vehicles, but if the rains continue as they may well do at this time of the year, the going will become increasingly difficult. Inside this plain, there is a range of regular fortresses defending the city. These defences lie to Leningrad's south-west. **Due south**, the Germans have still to pass the outlying fortress of Kransnovaridsk. If this should fall, the Germans must cross the plains commanded by artillery on the Pulkovo hills, which would certainly be a costly operation.

On the east, the city is defended by the fortress of Kolpinin, 15 miles away, **by flat marshy ground running all the way to Schlusselburg on the southern shore of Lake Ladoga,** which the Germans claim to have reached. **After heavy rains this country becomes impassable for panzer units.** But the enemy may have several weeks before the coming of the heavy autumn rains.

DESPERATE EFFORT BY GERMANS.

This then is the city, which the Germans are besieging. At one time, it was suggested that there was no hurry to take it. But this was German propaganda to convince Britain and the United States that the Russians were in no immediate danger. The consequences of a winter campaign in the north, where the snow lies many feet deep, will be extremely unpleasant, perhaps disastrous for the invaders and there is not the slightest doubt that **a desperate effort will be made to reduce Leningrad at the earliest possible moment even at a terrible cost.** The German losses have already been heavy. In fact some estimates put the number of killed and wounded at 400,000.

But the siege has only just begun. There is no ground for easy optimism. Berlin spokesmen explained that the losses will be reduced to a minimum by the use of artillery and bombers to blast the city to ruins like Warsaw or Rotterdam and, **with air superiority,** they may succeed in doing this. The attackers have already concentrated an immense force of infantry supported by thousands of guns and blasters for crushing machine-gun posts, mine-throwers, and dive-bombers. If they pay the price—and the German High Command never spares cannon fodder—they may succeed in smashing their way through the outer defences.

"EVERY HOUSE A BATTLE-LINE".

Even then, however, the battle will not be over. The city is divided by the half-mile channel of the Neva and more canals than there are in Venice. The Russians have sworn to make every street a battle-line and every house a strong post. After the unsurpassed courage and self-sacrifice they have shown, who can doubt that they mean every word of it? What is not so sure is their stock of ammunitions and food. The garrison has three or four million civilians to feed. We do not know how big are their reserves of food. If, however, they can hold out until the snow has come and the open country is swept by icy gales, they will have the consolation of knowing that the besiegers' zest will fall with the thermometer. As for the millions of men, women and children locked up in the city, it is impossible to contemplate the hardships and sufferings that may await them within the besieged city.

But sympathy alone is useless. What can we as a democarcy do to help? The answer is we can speed up production, bearing in mind that every gun and every tank and plane will either go to the Russians or will be used

by our own troops to strike at the common enemy. We know that every tank or plane or gun sent by Britain and the United States is one less for our own defence and this is a real sacrifice when the issues are life and death. But it is a sacrifice we are making and we will continue to make gladly for an ally fighting heroically with her back to the wall.

BRITISH NAVAL HELP IN ARCTIC.

In the Arctic, British warships have supported the Russian troops on the Murmansk front by attacking a German convoy. Two German destroyers and two other vessels have been sunk. **On land, we cannot give assistance to our ally until the overland route is in working order between the Persian Gulf and the Caspian Sea**. That will take time to get into first-class order. Ports at both ends must be enlarged and improved in order to handle large quantities of heavy goods, and railway and road communications in Iran are not very good. It is natural to be impatient with the delay, but critics, some of whom find considerable difficulty in organizing a house moving, should realise that you can't move tens of thousands of tons of machinery, explosives and food half way across the world in 24 hours.

WEEKLY WAR SUMMARY.

2—10—41 to 8—10—41.

Hitler's Speech on October 3 on the occasion of the inauguration of the Winter Help Campaign affords the best proof of the ebb which has lately set in in German morale. In introducing his Chief Goebbels betrayed his trepidation by exclaiming, 'It is vain to attempt to split up the German people and divert them from the chosen path, or to drive a wedge between them and Hitler.' Hitler's speech also, strange to say, was on the defensive, and for the first time apologetic, and though intended to startle the world it has fallen flat, judged from Mr. Cordell Hull's remark that he did not feel it necessary to acquaint himself with its contents. Otherwise the speech was in the usual Hitlerian vein, a mere medley of bombast and distortion. Assuming an air of injured innocence he declared that his 'constant desire for peace' was thwarted by Russian ambition to absorb FINLAND, RUMANIA, BULGARIA and the DARDANELLES, and his eastern attack was in defence of his 'allies.' He had evidently forgotten that only a year ago he would not allow Italian planes to fly across German territory to FINLAND, when FINLAND

one of these 'allies' was invaded by RUSSIA. Hitler's enumeration of Russian losses is, to say the least, fantastic, only equalled by another statement he made on an earlier occasion of British losses in the Atlantic. But there was one truth in his speech—cent per cent truth when he stated how sadly he had under-estimated Russian resistance.

The Russo-German War. The threat held out by Hitler in his Winter Relief Speech, of a fresh offensive calculated to defeat Russia, has materialised. In a gigantic effort the enemy is now attempting a frontal attack on Moscow, along the direct route which Napoleon took during his invasion, and where the enemy was foiled earlier in July when he made a similar attempt. Here for the last two months Timoshenko had wrested the initiative, recaptured ELNIA and invested SMOLENSK. Now, helped by numerical superiority, the Germans have made a pincer thrust on either side of Timoshenko towards VIASMA and BRYANSK. Here fierce battles are raging: but the German claim to have encircled Timoshenko has yet to be made good. If Timoshenko withdraws intact the loss of some more territory would not matter. If he is caught the situation is no doubt serious. VIASMA is only 140 miles from Moscow on the main SMOLENSK road. Two other pincer advances from the north-west, also directed against Moscow are reported, one from VELIKIYA LUKI to RESHEV and the other from NOVGOROD (north of Valdai Hills) to KALININ.

In the far south the Germans claim to have captured MARIUPOL and BERDIANSK on the Sea of Azov, and to have effected a junction with the forces advancing along the coast. But in the rear of these forces Budenny is counter-attacking from MELITOPOL. Though the German pressure is exerted along the whole front, to prevent transfer of Russian forces for the relief of the central front, it may be stated that the conditions round LENINGRAD have been more or less stabilised. The reports however are confusing. According to one account the enemy have dug themselves in round LENINGRAD, and the Russians are dislodging them; according to another the enemy has launched a desperate assault to reduce the city, which is being successfully repulsed.

Russian resistance continues to be maintained in other sectors. ODESSA holds out; PEREKOV has not been penetrated; KHARKOV has not been reached; and MURMANSK eludes the enemy. Russian morale never before stood so high.

The Three-Power Conference.—The success of the recent conference at Moscow seems to have exasperated the enemy to a fresh gamble, this time in the centre. At the time of the Atlantic meeting he fondly prophesied that the Moscow conference would never come to pass; when the conference did meet he predicted it would end in a fiasco; but when the conference successfully completed its labours ahead of schedule, the enemy had to realise that he had marshalled against himself the deadliest combination of all time, of the greatest naval power, the greatest manufacturing power and the power with the largest land armies.

Finland's reply to the British note of September 28, warning her to desist from aggressive designs upon RUSSIA, is evasive and smacks of dictation from BERLIN. Old stories of Russia's 'unprovoked' attack in 1939, and its renewal in June of this year, are rehashed to serve as an excuse. The bold assertion is made that FINLAND was and is still on the defensive; but FINLAND'S case is given away when she has to admit that she is pushing into Russian territory in order to safeguard her frontier, and that the territory so invaded contains a population mostly Finnish.

Religion and War.—It may be remembered how GERMANY has been attempting to persuade the world that her War on the eastern front is a Crusade against Godless RUSSIA. The speech of the Soviet ambassador in LONDON a few weeks ago nailed this lie to the counter by describing the extent of religious worship and toleration at present permitted in RUSSIA. Speaking at a Diocesan conference this week, the Archbishop of Canterbury smashed the German propaganda by declaring that he was proud of the new Russian ally, in spite of the cruelties, persecutions and oppressions which once stained the Russian Revolution. In recent years there had come a welcome change of spirit towards religious toleration. RUSSIA now stood emancipated and chastened from the errors of the past. He added, 'we have something to learn from RUSSIA in the bold and far-seeing planning of economic resources for the good of the whole community. They have something to learn from us in giving scope for the freedom and responsibility of the human personality'.

Dr. Clodius—Foiled in his attempt to persuade TURKEY to break the Anglo-Turkish Chrome Agreement which expires on January 42, the redoubtable Dr. Clodius has now renewed his demands for the supply of Turkish Chrome in 1943 and 1944 in exchange for armamen

TURKEY with the full knowledge of BRITAIN is understood to have insisted that the supply should be dependent on actual delivery of German goods in exchange, that is, to have said that if GERMANY failed to supply the armaments which TURKEY wanted the Chrome will not be forthcoming.

Repatriation.—Proposals for the repatriation and exchange of sick and wounded prisoners of war between GERMANY and BRITAIN had been in progress for many months through the medium of a third Power, but no agreement was reached until September 1, when GERMANY specifically agreed through the Swiss Legation to carry out the exchange in the first week of October, in British hospital ships and through the Channel Ports; she also reported through the American Embassy the number of British prisoners to be 1,200. The British Government agreed to supplement the 150 German prisoners in BRITAIN by including some German women, children and over-age prisoners, to the limit of space in the hospital ships. German prisoners were also embarked at NEWHAVEN, when at the eleventh hour, contrary to the Geneva Convention of 1939 which requires repatriation 'without regard to rank or number' GERMANY demanded 'an eye for an eye' as it were and communicated by wireless that she would exchange only an equal number, say 100 for 100. There was nothing to do but to disembark the enemy prisoners and cancel the voyage of the hospital ships on their mission of mercy.

The Manila Conference between the army chiefs of BRITAIN and the U. S. A. has concluded successfully. Questions of mutual assistance in the event of war in the Pacific were discusssd. It has served as a warning to JAPAN. The Axis Plan of 'one by one' will not succeed in the FAR EAST.

Asiatic Life-Lines.—Among the several matters with which Mr. Duff Cooper will be faced is the question of opening new communications to CHINA. The Far Eastern problem is threefold—Chinese resistance should keep JAPAN in leash, CHINA's efforts should be supplemented by American aid in material, and BRITAIN should open communications through British territory for the material to reach CHINA. After the Japanese occupation of INDO-CHINA, the only route open to CHINA is the BURMA road, which at best of times is limited in capacity and is now exposed to Japanese attacks. Already large stocks of

American materials are accumulating in the RANGOON docks and deteriorating. CHINA has a long frontier with INDIA, and this should be tapped, and immediately. Time is a vital factor.

Unrest in German-occupied Countries.—There has been a noticeable change of late in the occupied countries from a feeling of dumb fatalism to unrest and defiance. The change is symptomatic of the growing belief that the Germans are vulnerable like others, and that their defeat can be achieved. One proof of it is the fact that though repression and persecution continue outwardly, the Gestapo is now mainly on the defensive, having to face the hostility of whole nations. Different countries are resorting to different forms of resistance—YUGOSLAVIA fights openly; CZECHOSLOVAKIA by passive resistance; NORWAY by non-cooperation and occupied FRANCE by assault on individuals.

War at Sea.—The Atlantic situation has improved so far that British tankers will now be spared for American use. BRITAIN, of all belligerent countries is now able to **increase** her food rationing, though it is the beginning of the third year of the war.

The liner *I. C. White*, a Lease and Lend British Cargo steamer, flying the Panama flag and manned by an American crew, was torpedoed on her way from CURACOA to CAPETOWN.

India's National Defence Council.—On the 6th of October H. E. the Viceroy inaugurated the first session of the National Defence Council, at which for the first time representatives of Indian States and BRITISH INDIA met together to confer on war problems. In a message sent to the meeting Mr. Churchill observed that 'the sons of INDIA', who had already 'shown themselves worthy of the highest respect and honour among military men', would be fighting in 1942 on the 'long front from the Caspian to the Nile, barring the eastern progress of the war to the plains of Hindustan'. In opening the Conference, His Excellency the Viceroy stated that INDIA had now become 'the base of operations for great campaigns and great strategic movements'

The Neutrality Act.—A Bill has been introduced in the House of Representatives to permit American merchantmen to carry arms. The further question of allowing merchantmen to touch belligerent ports or sail through combat zones is left open for later settlement.

SIDE LIGHTS.

A REFLECTION. Except for the substitution of one nation for another, the similarity of the shape of the world in 1917 and in 1941 is rather remarkable. The difference, of course, is that it is RUSSIA and not FRANCE which is maintaining a powerful and, it may prove, decisive resistance to the German armies. But otherwise, both in alignments and ideologies, there is a striking likeness. The *Mitteleuropa* of the last war is transformed into the more monstrous and dangerous vision of Hitler's New Order; against that as a conception is the aim of some kind of international federation. (In point of fact, that notion is already being tried out by the Union of Soviet Republics, and many a group in both hemispheres who have no ties whatever with the Third International now support this original darling of Communist philosophy.) The Allied States—once more BRITAIN, RUSSIA and AMERICA—so far seem officially wedded to the restoration of independent nation states, but just as in the last war, the essence (unfortunately never to materialize) of the League of Nations was the idea of tempering international anarchy with some form of federated control, so now the same idea is earnestly debated *passim*, in books, from the platform, and in legislative assemblies.

TURKEY ON HER TOES. In our leading article this week there is a passing reference to the possibility of a German sea-borne invasion of the CAUCASUS over the Black Sea. Actually there seems to be no immediate danger of a German attack on TURKEY. Perhaps Hitler still hopes that there will be no need for such, but that he will be able to coax the Turks into a betrayal of both their Allies and their interests by allowing Axis fleets through the Straits. What is certain is that no maritime expedition can possibly be undertaken without either the permission or the subjugation of TURKEY, so no doubt tremendous pressure will be applied by Hitler when he considers the time ripe. Happily, if and when that challenge comes, TURKEY will be in totally different position from her previous isolation. There are British troops at all three of her frontiers who are being speedily prepared to come to TURKEY's assistance at call. Moreover, the winsome Dr. Clodius is no longer in so commanding a position at ANKARA. He has no familiar stranglehold with one-sided politico-commercial agreements with TURKEY, and TURKEY is fast taking advantage of proferred British help not only in trade exchanges, but in improvement of communications. The United Kingdom Corporation for instance is in treaty with the Turkish Ministry for rapid development of communications in Southern ANATOLIA, which will facilitate an enormous increase in the traffic to be brought to and from the new

jetty at ALEXANDRETTA, which will soon be (if it is not already) handling quantities of locomotives and heavy material of all kinds exported to TURKEY fron BRITAIN.

THE BOGUS CAESAR. The total eclipse of Mussolini's reputation must be near. He has for long been treated as a debunked wastrel by his one-time pupil, Hitler. Only a certain diminishing proportion of the Italians themselves now regard him as anything but a nuisance. And finally, he has begun to lose confidence in himself. Newspaper men seem agreed that the principal purpose of his recent meeting with Hitler was to back up, fearfully, the BERLIN spokesman who on September 16 started the hare about a huge Auchinleckian offensive being imminent in LIBYA. They also agree that Hitler told him that he wasn't going to waste troops so badly needed elsewhere to keep Mussolini's potty little empire alive; that the most he proposed to do for him was to lend him some *Luftwaffe* squadrons based on GREECE and CRETE, or perhaps to distract the army of the Nile's threat by demonstrations (with massed Bulgarian troops) on the Black Sea. In short the Duce got very little out of his *darshan*.

He may well be nervous! General Auchinleck's Army grows and practices, grows and practices. Not so General Rommel's vaunted African Corps. That narrow sea passage south of SICILY over which the Axis forces have been getting reinforcements and supplies is becoming a pretty unhealthy route! In the first fortnight of September British and Dutch submarines sank 100,000 tons of shipping thereabouts. On September 18 again, they sank two 25,000 ton liners full of troops for TRIPOLI, and a third large vessel was heavily hammered from the air after it had docked!

You will have noticed, too, that the voyagers are so fearful that, as on September 18, *two* merchantmen had to have an escort of *five* war vessels, and even that was not good enough! Now an escort vessel does not carry men, munitions or food—which Rommel badly wants—but it does use up a lot of fuel —which Hitler badly wants. And at the same time behind them, *pour encourager lea autres*, the R. A. F. bombs fat targets as far apart as the Royal Arsenal at TURIN, the Munitions factory at LICATA (SICILY), the ferry power-house at MESSINA and the train ferries themselves. Mussolini's famous Bridge of Ships has become a veritable Bridge of Sighs.

RUSSIAN RESOURCES. Our leading article tries to show the crucial importance of the next fortnight or so in the big battle. An experienced commentator reckons the chances of LENINGRAD at about fifty-fifty, with any bias there may be slightly in favour of the Germans. He regards Budenny's job in the south less optimistically, but he had not then

foreseen what the papers to-day speak of, a strong counter-attack by that dauntless Marshall, in the effort to relieve the pressure on the CRIMEA. One way or another, we are forced to make some reckoning of what the loss of the battle on the southern front would mean to the Russians. (We know what such would mean to the Germans---the beginning of the end!)

On this point we are authoritatively supplied with the following figures.

If the Soviet armies are forced to fall back to the line of the Don, there would still remain to them the following percentages of vital resources. Petrol 100—chrome 100—copper 100—lead 100—zinc 100—manganese 65—steel 55—power-for-machinery output 50—coal 39—-iron ore 37-pig iron 35-chemical industries 35 and aluminium 8.

If the Russian retreat continues to the line of the Volga, some of these percentages would slightly decrease. Petrol would drop to 85 per cent.

Withdrawal to either the Don or the Volga therefore would by no means ruin Russian supplies. The effect only would be considerable in the last half dozen categories mentioned in the first list; only in respect of aluminium would it be catastrophic. Now aluminium is a positive essential for a very essential arm, namely aeroplanes, and it is probably a large supply of this metal which is being rushed forward to Russia from her allies.

As to the other *sine qua non* for every belligerent, namely Oil, just about 90 of Russian resources are located in the TRANS-CAUCASUS. It is believable therefore that the final phase of the gigantic struggle now going on will take place in this direction, and many a hope rests on Budenny's attempt to stop the twin German advance east from KIEV-KHARKOV, and from the CRIMEA. At the same time it should be remembered that a land campaign is not enough to give the Germans access to the great treasure even though they deprive Russia of it. Control of oil supplies demands control of the Black Sea, and that very vitally concerns TURKEY!

THE CRIMEA. ODESSA, inspiring as its defence is proving, is not a naval base and therefore not of vital importance to either side. The object of the Germans in by-passing it and concentrating on the CRIMEA, is to deprive the Russian fleet of their great base at SEVASTOPOL, and leave them only the ports of NOVOROSSISK and BATOUM, both of which would be vulnerable to air attack once the CRIMEA were in German hands.

At the Isthmus of PEREKOP a great battle is being fought. The Germans say they are through the isthmus; the Russians deny it flatly. If the Russian defences prove too strong on the narrow neck, there are two alternative routes

which they can try, first the Railway causeway, and secondly a narrow and bridgeable channel separating the isthmus from the mainland. The Germans have apparently reached GENISCHEK, to the east of PEREKOP and on the Sea of Azov, whence they might make some auxiliary attempt.

But the recent news of Budenny's southern forces' counter-attack from KHERSON (on the Dnieper about 75 miles north-west of the isthmus) will probably make the Gremans think again. It would not be much good to penetrate the CRIMEA at enormous cost, only to find any retreat cut off.

THE GERMAN AT HOME. Even pro-German papers have difficulty in concealing the war-weariness of the German people. The STOCKHOLM "*Aftonbladet*" recently remarked on "the deeply resigned tiredness and war-weariness of the people of BERLIN", where there is universal longing for an early peace and a growing obsession about the increasingly heavy raids of the R. A. F. The leader of the Womens' Party Organisation in HAMBURG, again, recently suggested a competition among women to see who complained least!

Do not let us, however, run away with the idea that there is any chance yet of a revolution in GERMANY. Far from being the masterful *herrenvolk* of Nazi imagination, the Germans are the most docile and obedient people in the world. They will obey their leaders, if only because they now really fear the wrath of the victimised countries of EUROPE, to say nothing of their combatant foes. No, as long as their armies continue to advance, or they can be made to believe so, they will be behind Hitler, but the time will come when that advance is halted, when the 'invincibles' begin to recoil and stagger homewards, and it is then that the R. A. F.'s hail of bombs will have its fullest and speediest effect, for war-weariness then may well become a revolt.

BRITISH and RUSSIAN Air Raids over ENEMY and ENEMY-occupied Territories.

Date.	Targets.	Damage caused by air bombardment.	British and Russian air losses.	Enemy aircraft losses.
29—9—41. (Monday.)				
	GERMANY and GERMAN-occupied EUROPE.			
DAY :—				
	Enemy patrol boats and a barge off the BELGIAN coast.	1 patrol boat set on fire. The barge sunk.	...	...

Date.	Targets.	Damage caused by air bombardment.	British and Russian air losses.	Enemy aircraft losses.
29—9—41.	**(Monday.)**—*cont.*			

GERMANY and GERMAN-occupied EUROPE—*cont.*

Targets	Damage caused by air bombardment	British and Russian air losses	Enemy aircraft losses
A gun position on the BELGIAN coast	Put out of action.	...	...
A Convoy of lorries in Northern FRANCE.	5 lorries set on fire.	...	...

NIGHT :—

Targets	Damage caused by air bombardment	British and Russian air losses	Enemy aircraft losses
GERMANY'S most important BALTIC Sea port of STETTIN.	Large fires started.	8 night bombers.	1 fighter & another damaged.
The dock area in HAMBURG ...	...		
Docks at CHERBOURG and LE HAVRE.	...		
Offensive patrols over enemy aerodromes in occupied territories.	...		
A Gun position at LANNION	...1 enemy bomber set on fire.		

SICILY.

Targets	Damage caused by air bombardment	British and Russian air losses	Enemy aircraft losses
Aerodromes at GERBINI and COMISO	...	...	1 fighter and many more damaged.

ITALIAN AFRICA.

Targets	Damage caused by air bombardment	British and Russian air losses	Enemy aircraft losses
Aerodromes, railway stations, buildings, motor transport, garages and concentrations of motor transport at TRIPOLI.	Many vehicles set on fire and damaged.	1 fighter.	
Ships and harbour at BENGHAZI ...	...		
Troops and traffic on the coast road from TRIPOLI.	...		
Motor transport near SIRTE ...	...		

(By Russian planes).

EASTERN FRONT.

Targets	Damage caused by air bombardment	British and Russian air losses	Enemy aircraft losses
Air cambats and aircraft on the aerodromes along the whole battle.	...	9 planes.	26 planes.

Date.	Targets.	Damage caused by air bombardment.	British and Russian air losses.	Enemy aircraft losses.
30—9—41. (Tuesday).				
	GERMANY and GERMAN-occupied EUROPE.			
DAY :—				
	A heavily guarded convoy off the NORWEGIAN coast.	1 big ship hit.		
	Offensive sweeps over the ENGLISH CHANNEL and north coast of FRANCE.	...	1 fighter.	
	Two armed merchantships off CHERBOURG.	1 ship hit and set on fire.		
NIGHT :—				
	The docks and industrial quarters of HAMBURG and STETTIN.	Large fires started.		
	The docks and dock-side buildings at CHERBOURG and ST. NAZAIRE.	...		
	A factory, shipyards and oil depots at NANTES.	...	1 bomber.	
	Enemy aerodrome near LORIENT.	Damaged.		
	An enemy convoy in the CHANNEL.	1 large ship hit and set on fire.		
	Offensive patrol over the aerodromes in occupied territory.	...		
	ITALIAN AFRICA.			
	Barracks, Railway station, vehicles, tents, searchlights and gun positions at TRIPOLI.	Big fires started ; vehicles damaged ; guns silenced.		
	Shipping in the harbour at BENGHAZI.	...	4 planes.	
	Buildings at BARCE.	...		
	Motor transport on the road between BENGHAZI and TOCRA, and BARCE.	Machine-gunned.		
	The Aerodrome at GAMBUT.	...		
	SICILY.			
	The Aerodrome at COMISO	...	...	...
	(By Russian planes.)			
	EASTERN FRONT.			
	Air combats, aircraft on the aerodromes and German positions along the whole Front.	...	9 planes.	20 planes.

Date.	Targets.	Damage caused by air bombardment.	British and Russian air losses.	Enemy aircraft losses.
1—10—41. (Wednesday.)				
	GERMANY and GERMAN-occupied EUROPE.			
DAY :—				
	Offensive patrol over the ENGLISH CHANNEL.	...	2 day-fighters.	2 fighters.
NIGHT :—				
	Military objectives at STUTTGART and elsewhere in Western GERMANY. **Docks** at CALAIS, BOULOGNE and OSTEND.	...	1 bomber.	1 fighter but many damaged.
	Two ships off the FRISIAN Islands.	Both hit.	...	...
	ITALIAN AFRICA.			
	No information available.			
	(By Russian planes).			
	EASTERN FRONT.			
	Air combats, aircraft on the aerodromes and infantry along the whole battle area.	...	8 planes.	16 planes
2—10—41. (Thursday.)				
	GERMANY and GERMAN-occupied EUROPE.			
DAY :—				
	Offensive sweeps over the ENGLISH CHANNEL and Northern FRANCE.	...	3 fighters.	6 fighters.
	An enemy barge off DUNKIRK.	...		
	Two motor vessels off the coast of NORWAY.	...		
	ITALIAN AFRICA.			
	The harbour and shipping at BENGHAZI.	...	4 planes.	Many planes damaged.
	Motor transport between TOKRA and BARCE ; and at EL GAZALA.	...		
	Motor transport and stores at BARDIA	Machine-gunned.		
	A jetty on the TOBRUK-BARDIA road	...		
	Air combat over SIDI BARRANI area	Many planes damaged.		

Date.	Targets.	Damage caused by air bombardment.	British and Russian air losses.	Enemy aircraft losses.
2—10—41.	**(Thursday)**—*cont.*			
	(By Russian planes).			
	EASTERN FRONT.			
	Air combats and aircraft on the aerodromes over the whole battle area.	...	19 planes.	51 planes.
3—10—41.	**(Friday.)**			
	GERMANY and GERMAN-occupied EUROPE.			
	NIGHT :—			
	The Docks at DUNKIRK, ROTTERDAM, ANTWERP and BREST.	Fires started.		
	Enemy aerodromes at AALBORG (in DENMARK).	Damaged		
	An aerodrome in Northern FRANCE		...	1 plane.
	ITALY.			
	An important railway Junction and munition factory at MARINA DI CATANZARO.	A stationary train in the junction also machine-gunned. Fires started.	...	...
	ITALIAN AFRICA.			
	Shipping and the harbour at BENGHAZI	...		
	Military objectives at BARDIA harbour	...		
	An enemy camp near SOLLUM ...	...	...	1 plane.
	Reconnaissance over enemy territory.	...		
	(By Russian Planes).			
	EASTERN FRONT.			
	Infantry, Panzer troops and **air combats** along the whole battle area.	...	18 planes.	41 planes.
4—10—41.	**(Saturday.)**			
	GERMANY and GERMAN-occupied EUROPE.			
	No information available	... ...	...	...
	SICILY.			
	Enemy aerodromes and sea-plane bases at MARSALA, CATANIA and GERBINI.	...	...	...
	The warehouse at LICATA	... ...	...	...

Date.	Targets.	Damage caused by air bombardment.	British and Russian air losses.	Enemy aircraft losses.
4—10—41.	**(Saturday)**—*cont.*			
	ITALIAN AFRICA.			
	The harbour and shipping at BENGHAZI.	...	...	...
	(By Russian planes).			
	EASTERN FRONT.			
	Air combats, aircraft on the aerodrome and enemy troops and positions along the entire battle area		25 planes.	63 planes.
5—10—41.	**(Sunday.)**			
	GERMANY and GERMAN-occupied EUROPE.			
	No information as to day and night operations available.			
	SICILY.			
	Aerodromes at MARSALA, CATANIA and GERBINI.	Enemy planes damaged.	...	...
	ITALIAN AFRICA.			
	The shipping and the harbour at BENGHAZI.	Ships hit.		
	Aerodrome and the landing ground at BARCE.	Damaged.		
	Repair shops and power stations at BARCE.	Set on fire.		
	Motor transport workshops and ammunition dumps at BARDIA.	...		
	Air combat over the SIDI BARRANI area.	...	...	1 plane, many more damaged.
	MEDITERRANEAN.			
	A heavily guarded enemy convoy in the MEDITERRANEAN.	2 ships sunk and 1 ship damaged.	...	...
	(By Russian planes).			
	EASTERN FRONT.			
	Air combats, aircraft on the aerodromes and enemy positions along the whole battle area.	...	27 planes.	42 planes.
	BARENTS SEA.			
	An enemy transport in the BARENTS SEA.	Sunk.	...	...

ENEMY Air Raids over BRITAIN, BRITISH Territories and RUSSIA.

Date.	Targets.	Damage caused by air bombardment.	Enemy aircraft losses.	British and Russian air losses.
30—9—41. (Tuesday).				
	BRITAIN.			
	A coastal area in North-east ENGLAND.	A few casualties and slight damage.	1 plane.	No loss.
	RUSSIA.			
	Moscow and **Leningrad**	... ...	...	...
1—10—41. (Wednesday.)				
	BRITAIN.			
NIGHT :—				
	Scattered points in the East, South-east and South-west of ENGLAND.	Little damage and a very small number of casualties.	No loss.	No loss.
	RUSSIA.			
	Moscow and **Leningrad**	... ...	...	...
2—10—41. (Thursday.)				
	BRITAIN.			
NIGHT :—				
	Coastal areas in North-east and South-east ENGLAND; South-east SCOTLAND.	Some damage and a few casualties.	3 bombers.	No loss.
	RUSSIA.			
	Moscow and **Leningrad**	...	1 plane.	...
3—10—41. (Friday).				
	BRITAIN.			
NIGHT :—				
	Eastern districts of ENGLAND and SCOTLAND.	...	...	...
	RUSSIA.			
	Moscow and **Leningrad**	... ...	3 planes.	...

Date.	Targets.	Damage caused by air bombardment.	Enemy aircraft losses.	British and Russian air losses.
4—10—41. (Saturday).				
	BRITAIN.			
NIGHT :—				
	An area on the East coast of ENGLAND.	Slight damage, 1 person injured.	...	...
	RUSSIA.			
	Moscow and **Leningrad**	... ...	2 planes.	...
5—10—41. (Sunday.)				
	BRITAIN.			
NIGHT :—				
	East and South-west of ENGLAND.	No damage.	1 plane.	...
	RUSSIA.			
	Moscow	... ...	2 planes.	...
	Leningrad	... ...	...	...
6—10—41. (Monday.)				
	BRITAIN.			
NIGHT :—				
	HUMBER area	... ...	1 plane.	...
	EGYPT.			
	Suez Canal area	... Slight damage.	...	...
	RUSSIA.			
	Moscow and **Leningrad**	... ...	...	...

THREE MONTHS' R. A. F. RAIDS ON GERMANY.

Here are figures of R. A. F. raids on Germany from June 14 to September 15, 1941. Berlin and Kiel tie for the third place.

Town.	Total Raids.	Very Heavy.	Heavy.
Cologne	24	5	16
Bremen	16	3	10
Berlin	14	4	9
Kiel	14	2	11
Frankfurt	11	5	6
Mannheim	11	5	5
Dusseldorf	13	0	11
Duisberg	10	3	6
Munster	7	3	3
Hanover	9	0	8
Hamburg	6	3	2
Emden	8	1	1
Aachen	5	1	3
Essen	4	4	0
Wilhelmshaven	7	0	2
Osnabruck	4	1	2
Oldenburg	3	0	2
Karlsruhe	3	1	2
Magdeburg	3	0	3
Bielfeld	3	0	2
Dortmund	2	1	1
Stettin	2	0	2
Bremerhaven	3	0	1
Hamm	2	0	2
Krefeld	2	0	2
Munchen Gladbach	2	0	2
Rheydt	2	0	1
Huls	1	1	0
Kassel	1	1	0
Vegesack	1	0	1
Brunswick	1	0	1
Luna	1	0	1
Sylt	1	0	1
Rheine	1	0	1
Cuxhaven	1	0	1
Halle	1	0	0
Rostock	1	0	0
	200	44	120

NOTES ON RUSSIAN CLIMATE.

Murmansk. Rain from end of August to end of September. Snow from beginning of October to middle of May, during which period temperature fluctuates between 15 and 40 degrees below zero (Centigrade).

Leningrad. Heavy rain throughout October. Snow from beginning of November. Day temperature not more than 17°C.

Moscow. Rain during October. Snow from beginning of November. Temperature drops as low as minus 35°C. These conditions also apply to the region between Moscow and Kharkov.

Rostov-on-Don. Real winter does not begin until January and continues for about three months. Main roads are passable for mechanical transport.

MUSSOLINI IS MISERABLE.

Never was Mussolini's glum scowl more in keeping with his mood than now. His Imperialistic adventure swelled the Italian budget deficit in six years (1935–41) from two to 28 milliards of lire. In 1940 he had something to show for it—an East African Empire almost as big as India. In 1941 Eritrea, Somaliland and Abyssinia were taken from him. Now he fears Libya may follow suit. According to some reports, he has asked Hitler for increased German aid in the Western Desert and Hitler's answer has been to ask him to send half a million Italian soldiers to supply a more urgent need on the Eastern Front.

The winter campaigning season in North Africa is at hand. Yet General Rommel has been unable to launch a full-scale invasion of Egypt. The reason is not hard to find. Day and night, British submarines, Fleet Air Arm planes and R. A. F. bombers and fighters tear Rommel's supply line to shreds. In a single attack recently, British submarines destroyed two-thirds of an Italian convoy probably carrying two complete infantry divisions to Tripoli. In a recent period of two weeks, submarines sank 100,000 tons of enemy shipping carrying supplies and reinforcements to Rommel's German African Corps and its band of ragged Italian retainers.

Linked with these ceaseless and successful British raids that have made Mussolini's Bridge of Ships a Bridge of Sighs are the carefully planned aerial sorties against munitions, factories and embarkation ports in Italy and Sicily, the Italy-Sicily train ferry service, Italian coastal reconnaissance seaplane bases and aerodromes from which Italian convoys might be expected to receive fighter support. Well may Mussolini regret the decision he took sixteen short months ago.

HITLER THREATENS THE 'ATLANTIC BRIDGE'. WILL A THIRD U-BOAT CAMPAIGN BEGIN?

by

H. C. Ferraby (in a recent B. B. C. talk).

CANADA'S Prime Minister, Mr. Mackenzie King has made public a naval secret which I suppose has been no secret to the German Admiralty for a long time past. Mr. King referred to the bridge from the old world to the new, a trans-Atlantic bridge, that runs between Scotland, and Iceland, between Iceland and Greenland, between Greenland and Newfoundland, and so by a great causeway to Halifax, Boston, and New York.

This is the great convoy route across the North Atlantic at the present time. Others of course are used: from time to time we vary our tactics in the protection of our shipping just as the U-boats vary their tactics of offence.

But the northern bridge has a great advantage over the more southerly and the more usual trans-Atlantic routes. It is further removed from the bases of the long distance bombers in Occupied France. The northern bridge is in four spans, each between 600 and 700 miles long.

A 12-knot convoy can cover each span in approximately 2½ days, and along each span of the bridge, there has been aerial protection, as well as naval escorts the whole time, except of course in the roughest of the winter weather. But we have found during this war, that modern aircraft can battle their way through many storms that five years ago would have kept every machine grounded.

The northern bridge has been, up to the present, a remarkably safe means of transit. It was publicly stated in North America, only a few days ago, that, since the American patrol system in the western half of the Atlantic was instituted, no merchant ship had been lost on the span between Halifax and Iceland.

As we saw at the time of Mr. Churchill's cruise, a convoy of as many as 80 or 90 ships can pass over the eastern span of the bridge from Iceland to our northern ports untouched and unharmed. But that is only achieved by constant vigilance and constant effort; there has always been the question: "How long will Hitler hold his U-boats back from open acts of war within the American patrol zone?"

Now the first of such attacks has occurred. We seem to be on the threshold of a third spell of intensive pressure by the enemy in the Battle of the Atlantic.

Twice the naval forces of the free peoples have smashed U-boat campaigns; this third campaign, if it is the third, will probably be launched against the western spans of the northern bridge, and would inevitably affect very closely the connecting link with us.

It would throw down also an unmistakable challenge to the American patrols. Such a third campaign would bring the war to the very doorstep of all the people who live and work on the North American continent and demonstrate to them how vital is sea power in the struggle against aggression.

A FAMOUS JOURNALIST'S VIEWS ON AMERICAN PROBABILITIES.

WILL THE UNITED STATES "COME IN"?

THE AMERICAN'S OPPOSITION TO LAND WARFARE.

EXTENT TO WHICH HE IS WILLING TO HELP.

Mr. H. N. Brailsford, after an absence of three months in America and on the high seas, writes in *Reynolds News* on September 7;—

The question every one puts first to me is, Will the United States "come in"?, or, as optimists phrase it, When will she "come in"?

When I landed in New York, I realised as I had never before done how abnormal our own existence had become in two years of war. In my first hour on shore, the streets told me that New York is still absorbed in all the usual interests of peace—summer clothes, holiday camps, the next fashion in cars and what not. A strike attracted its attention here, a by-election there. Why should it turn its back on this and plunge into war?

I soon realised that, while every hundred Americans are divided, according to the Gallup poll, into 23 Isolationists who think the President has gone too far, 22 Interventionists who wish he would go further, and 55 who think the present position is about right, the real division is within every individual American breast.

The average American hates the Nazis; he admires our steadiness; he will back any form of material aid, however generous. I think he would acquiesce in any action in the air or on the sea that the President might order. He is slow to consent to the disturbance of his daily life by such measures as the rationing of petrol or the curtailment of the manufacture of new cars. **But, above all, his instinct is to cry out against any share in land warfare.** Every nerve in his body shudders at the memory of trench war, and against any expedition to Europe he is, and will remain, adamant. When he reasons about it, he argues that we can finish the war by bombing German cities and tightening the blockade. That view (in my opinion wholly mistaken) is held even by our ablest and most ardent friends. Most, but not all, of these are even opposed to a formal declaration of war.

This was the position up to that startling day in June when Hitler invaded Russia. Its effect on the average man was to relax his tension, ease his fears and lighten his troubled conscience. The enemy, who might have chosen to overrun Portugal and occupy Dakar, had turned his face eastwards. If the danger to the New World had not wholly vanished, it had become less imminent and less credible. American experts grossly under-estimated the Russian army, but they fully realised that the Germans would emerge weakened and wearied from this mad adventure. **Overnight on June 22 the prospect of America's entry into war was indefinitely postpond; the need for supreme sacrifice had passed.**

Into this state of mind there entered other considerations on which Isolationists played. Hostility to the Soviet Union was in this republic more violent and more general than it ever was in our island. In spite of this hostility, public opinion accepted the duty of supplying Russia—for cash down—with hardly a murmur. For that we have to thank Mr. Churchill's broadcast which instantly gripped America's common-sense.

When will America declare war? Only Congress can do that, and the reader can now judge for himself how little Congress is likely to do anything of the kind.

Finally, can events drag this reluctant republic in? Hitler will not do it. His caution in the face of the heaviest provocation is sufficiently obvious. That is the best answer to all ingenious arguments which purport to show that America's entry would do us no good. He may one day risk it by marching into Spain and Portugal and attempting to seize their islands in the Atlantic. But it seems to me unlikely that Hitler will provoke Mr. Roosevelt in this way as long as he is absorbed in the Russian campaign.

The other compelling event might come from Japan. My own impression is that, in spite of her bluster, Japan will not challenge the American fleet.

To sum up, my answer spontaneously is that America will not "come in" nor do I think that the President could lead her in. Events might drag her in, but, unless her blood temperature rises many degrees, she will not join in land warfare in Continental Europe.

THE RESISTANCE OF BELGIUM.

KING LEOPOLD'S LEAD TO HIS PEOPLE.

CAPTIVE MONARCH'S ATTITUDE TO PRO-NAZI LEADER.

[Back in the spring of last year, both Mr. Churchill and Sir Roger Keyes asked the world to suspend judgment on King Leopold's then incomprehensible capitulation. M. Emile Cammaerts has recently published an eloquent defence of his king's actions then, which has received wide acceptance. This article on Leopald's behaviour since, is an interesting corollary. Ed.]

(*From the Times*).

Recent evidence from inside Belgium seems to justify the position taken by King Leopold in having constituted himself a prisoner of war. It is known to every man and women and child of his kingdom that he is resolute and uncompromising in his refusal to have anything to do with Hitler's attempt to found a "new order" for Belgium and for Europe; and his example is without doubt an inspiration to his sorely tried subjects in their daily struggle against the temptation to compromise for the sake of some immediate gain or alleviation.

The proposal by which the Germans have repeatedly tried to tempt the King himself is that he should resume active governance of the country with an "all Belgian" Ministry, composed of Rexists and Flamingants—the two pro-Nazi parties.

The story is current in Brussels that Degrelle, the notorious Rexist leader was recently received by King Leopold in his palace-prison. **His Majesty continued to write while Degrelle expounded to him his theory of Government. In the middle of the exposition the King rose from his writing aud said, "the audience which was imposed upon me is ended."** Degrelle, who had been professing monarchical principles, had to take the hint and depart. Even if the story be partly apocryphal, it is significant that it is widely circulated and believed.

There is little doubt that Degrelle's influence is declining. A recent much-advertised meeting of Rexists was countered by a simultaneous and larger meeting of Loyalists, and Degrelle was roughly handled on his way home. The circulation of his newspaper, *Le Pays Reel* ("Our Real Country"), is diminishing; and the allied party of Flemish extremists has incurred great unpopularity by admitting German officers to its meetings. The general attitude of Belgians to the invaders is one of frigid correctness and abstention from personal hospitality.

ALLIES' 1,500 MILE FRONT IN THE MIDDLE EAST.

MANNED BY FIVE ARMIES AND FOUR NAVIES.

BRITISH, INDIAN, AUSTRALIAN AND RUSSIAN FORCES.

ROAD AND RAIL COMMUNICATIONS.

by

Allan Moorhead.

(*In a cable to the* **Daily Express** *from Cairo*).

For five days I have been driving hard across the new British front in the Middle East. The route was Teheran (Iran), Baghdad (Iraq), Damascus (Syria), Jerusalem (Palestine) and Cairo (Egypt).

The distance was as far as from London to Istanbul (1,500 miles) and the size of the five countries greater than Greater Germany.

On every road British and Allied troops were on the move. In each city garrison troops stood on guard and British fighting aircraft were in the sky.

I saw four seas. On three—the Mediterranean, Red Sea and Indian Ocean—destroyers, sloops and cutters of the Royal Navy, Indian Navy and Australian Navy were in control, shepherding Allied and American merchantmen into port. On the Caspian Sea Russian Navy destroyers, ultra-modern and somewhat bigger than ours, had command from Astrakhan to Bandar Shah.

Nowhere, except in the Canal Area and at Haifa, were the Axis bombing or contesting our huge preparations in any way. Everywhere over this vast network British arms, American tanks and cars, Indian textiles and Australian foodstuffs were streaming along roads which a month or two ago were empty or crowded with enemy traffic coming the other way.

I found American aircraft in every country. More were arriving as I passed through Iran, Iraq and Syria. The first American and British supplies are on their way to the Russian armies camped around the Caspian Sea.

I passed thousands of road-workers in Syria and saw men labouring on new railways across this thousand-mile chain of deserts. Each day adds a few more miles.

The supply routes reach northwards now towards Russia. Four roads and one railway climb from the Persian Gulf, via the Persian wastes, to the shores of the Caspian. Bandar Shahpur is the southern port and railhead.

Soon it will be possible to take the train from the Persian Gulf to Moscow. From Basra another railway and road leads straight via Baghdad to the Mosul oil wells and Turkey. Then Syria. Fed by sea, land and canal, still another railway and two roads drive via Aleppo to Turkey. Other east and west routes link these countries together.

You can reckon now on three railways and at least a dozen roads leading northwards and the approaching winter will not put more than three or four roads out of action. Often supply convoys simply take to the open desert.

Waking as I travelled in an all-night air-conditioned bus from Baghdad to Damascus, I saw 40 Indian heavy lorries suddenly loom up out of the darkness, cut at a tangent across our track and disappear somewhere across the desert in the direction of the Turkish border. They steer by compass. They travel all night.

We heard air transports cruising in the darkness.

I was with five armies. In Iran I left Sikhs, Gurkhas and Mahrattas camping by desert streams. In appearance the Indian Army is the smartest of the lot and the best transported, with thousands of American vehicles. The Russians are the toughest, worst uniformed and best equipped. Their discipline is far stricter than that of the British Army.

They have many more technicians than we have. Many I spoke to had had ten years' training before this war began, none fewer than two years.

Yet they need transport. They were forced to seize every Iranian lorry and farm vehicle they could in their advance. From this month onward they are getting vehicles. And guns.

Through Syria and Palestine I was with the Australians, looking fresh now after two months' rest.

The gunners up the canal, too, have improved out of sight after two years' shooting. Everywhere from Iran to Egypt one came on units of the British Army. They bind together General Auchinleck's Army of the Nile and General Wavell's Army of the Tigris and Euphrates. All this makes an optimistic message. But I can write it no other way.

THE AXIS SPEAKS—AND IS ANSWERED.

A Commentary on Enemy Broadcasts to India and the Near East.

For the period September 22—29, 1941.

HITLER SEES RED.

" Allied aid to Russia will prove a geographical impossibility."

(*German news in English, Sept. 23*)

" The Bolsheviks have lost quantities of aircraft, guns and tanks which no possible efforts on the part of Britain or U. S. A. can replace."

(*German talk in English, Sept. 22.*)

One-third of Russian demands (and who can imagine they were light ?) have already been met by Great Britain ; more is on the way. America has given Russia a credit of 100,000,000 dollars. Two American tankers have reached Russia, nine others are on the way. 200 American fighter aircraft intended for Britain have with her consent been diverted to Russia. The R. A. F. Wing in Russia has already distinguished itself, and the Three Power Conference now in active session plans more aid for Russia.

" British and Soviet acrobatics cannot deduce the actual German losses (84,354 dead, 402,000 total casualties) in the greatest crusade in Europe."

(*German news in Hindustani, Sept 22*).

On a front 1,500 miles long for a period of roughly 90 days the German estimate works out to about *one German per mile per day*. **As for the figures they give regarding the Russian losses** *9,900,000* **they modestly imply that the whole Russian army has been wiped out, and apparently has been replaced.**

GERMAN GRIEF AND GREED.

" The world has been plunged into grief at the Anglo-Saxon high handedness in Iran."
(*German news in Hindustani, Sep. 24.*)

The people of Iran gave a spontaneous welcome to the Allied army and co-operated with them.. The Iranian army a creation of the late Shah, displayed little inclination to resist. Here is what an important Arabic paper *Saut al Haq* says in a leader : " The greed of the dictators has led them to direct offensive operations against the whole world ......what has occurred in Iran is approved by all democracies and is only to the advantage of Iran ; the Iranians will realise their hopes."

" Reports from Alexandria indicate that as a result of over-production cotton is hoarded in the streets...... they have become cotton dumps. Britain has not fulfilled her promise to buy the Egyptian cotton."
(*German news in Arabic and Persian, Sept. 25.*)

Lord Moyne said in Parliament recently that up to June 1941, the British Cotton Buying Commission had purchased cotton and cotton seed up to £ 25,000,000. In 1941 the British Government has undertaken to purchase half of the crop.

Further, whatever profit is likely to accrue to Britain in any subsequent transaction, *half of it will be returned to the growers.* The disinterestedness of Britain in this matter is obvious if it is remembered that England can have all the cotton she requires from America under the Lease-Lend Act.

AXIS REACTIONS.

Indifference

" The President is already helping Britain to his utmost, and it will make **very little difference to the course of the war** if the U. S. A. actually came to shooting or not."

(*English broadcast from Rome, Sept. 12.*)

".The Germans are behaving **like Christians** by turning the other cheek to Roosevelt."

(*German broadcast to U. S. A., Sept. 14.*)

"The so-called aid to Britain is the best way of strangling her........... Roosevelt gives her **apparent aid** so that he will strangle her slowly...........he does not loose his booty."

(*German broadcast to S. America, Sept. 13.*)

Indignation

"What the Axis powers could not foresee and therefore properly weigh up was **the frenzy** which at a certain point took possession of the most powerful man in the U. S. A. and induced him to make even **vaster decisions.**"

(*Signor Ansaldo in a broadcast on Sept. 12.*)

"American businessmen are **deliberately prolonging the war** to capture British Overseas markets."

(*German broadcast in English, Sept. 16.*)

"Roosevelt's speech is the final proof that he has **been aggressive for years.**"

(*German broadcast in German, Sept. 14.*).

"The speech is the most **barefaced trick** yet played on an unsuspecting people."

(*German broadcast to U. S. A., Sept. 13.*)

"President Roosevelt is ready **to set a spark to the powder barrel.**"

(*German radio quoting Aftonbladet correspondent, July 1941*).

IN CASE WE HADN'T NOTICED.

"The German news policy serves **primarily and exclusively the fighting forces.**"

(*German broadcast to America, Sept. 16*).

PROGRAMME OF LECTURES

OF THE

Pudukkottai State War Information Bureau.

1941— LECTURE LXV—(*Batch 2*).

October	...11, Saturday ...	Town Hall ...	6.30 p. m.
	12, Sunday ...	Vayalogam ...	6.00 p. m.
		Kudumiamalai ...	6.30 p. m.
	13, Monday ...	Nachandupatti ...	6.00 p. m.
		Virachilai ...	6.30 p. m.
	14, Tuesday ...	College (A) English ...	10.15 a. m.
		Perumanadu ...	6.00 p. m.
		Pulvayal ...	6.30 p. m.
	15, Wednesday	C. S. M. High School ...	10.00 a. m.
		College (B) Tamil ...	10.15 a. m.
		Rani's High School ...	10.15 a. m.
		Tirumayyam ...	6.00 p. m.
		Konapet ...	6.30 p. m.
	16, Thursday ...	Panayappatti ...	6.00 p. m.
		Rangiam ...	6.30 p. m.
	17, Friday ...	Kodumbalur ...	6.00 p. m.
		Viralimalai ...	6.30 p. m.

LECTURE LXVI—(*Batch 3*).

	21, Tuesday ...	Alangudi ...	6.00 p. m.
		Rasiamangalam ...	6.30 p. m.
	22, Wednesday.	Ramachandrapuram ...	6.00 p. m.
		Rayavaram ...	6.30 p. m.
	23, Thursday ...	C. S. M. High School ...	10.00 a. m.
		College (B) Tamil ...	10.15 a. m.
		Rani's High School ...	10.15 a. m.
		Kottaikkadu ...	6.00 p. m.
		Karambakkudi ...	6.30 p. m.
	24, Friday ...	Annavasal ...	6.00 p. m.
		Kilakkurichi ...	6.30 p. m.

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